

September 6, 2007

Upon the recommendation of Mayor Higgins and Council President Bardsley

**Upon the recommendation of the Northampton Human Rights Commission,
the Northampton City Council Proposes a Resolution on the Genocide in the
Darfur Region of Sudan.**

BE IT RESOLVED

- WHEREAS, the policy and practice of genocide is abhorrent to the moral and political values of the residents of the City of Northampton, the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America, and, indeed, democratic and free societies everywhere; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Northampton is a leader among municipalities in Massachusetts working to foster community sensitivity to diversity and human rights issues, and in 1998 established the Human Rights Commission to provide education and advocacy about human rights; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Northampton welcomes residents and visitors from all over the world, and recognizes that it is part of a global community; and
- WHEREAS, the government of Sudan has engaged in a policy of genocide against its own African tribal populations in Darfur through use of its military and through sponsorship of attacks by armed militias known as the Janjaweed; and
- WHEREAS, the Janjaweed and military of the Sudanese government are responsible for bombing villages and hospitals, gang-raping civilians, summarily executing Darfurians, using forced starvation as a weapon of war, and impeding access to humanitarian aid for the 4.2 million Darfurians that are now conflict-affected and in need of humanitarian assistance; and
- WHEREAS, the Sudanese government is responsible for the death of approximately 400,000 Darfurians and displacement of 2.5 million refugees within Darfur and Chad; and

WHEREAS, in September 2004, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell declared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Sudanese government and the Sudanese government-sponsored Janjaweed have committed genocide; and

WHEREAS, both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate have declared unanimously that the Sudanese regime of dictator Omar al-Bashir is committing genocide; and

WHEREAS, international companies, by conducting business operations in Sudan, bring direct foreign investment dollars to Sudan and provide both moral and political cover to the Sudanese regime; and

WHEREAS, the Sudanese government has refused to admit a United Nations peacekeeping force that has been authorized by the United Nations Security Council; and

WHEREAS, European and Asian foreign investment in the Sudanese economy has worked to sustain profligate military expenditures by the Khartoum regime and to insulate this regime from the economic consequences of its enormous external debt;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

that the City Council of Northampton urges the President and the U.S. Congress to take immediate and continuing action to pressure the government of Sudan to end the genocide in Darfur; and

that the Northampton City Council urges the President and Congress to press for immediate deployment of the already authorized United Nations peacekeeping force; for strengthening the African Union force now in Darfur until the United Nations force is deployed; and for ensuring access for delivery of humanitarian aid; and

that the Northampton City Council urges the Massachusetts Legislature to enact a Bill to divest the Commonwealth's funds from targeted companies which, by their doing business with the government of Sudan, support or enable the genocide in Darfur; and

that on behalf of the Northampton City Government, the Northampton Human Rights Commission shall distribute copies of this Resolution to the President of the United States, to all members of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation, to other members of Congress in positions of leadership in the House of Representatives and the Senate, to the Governor of Massachusetts, to members of Northampton's delegation to the state legislature, and to other leaders of the state legislature as deemed appropriate; and

that this resolution shall be posted on the official City of Northampton website.